GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1142
ANSWERED ON:21.08.2007
PATENT ON BASMATI RICE
Fanthome Shri Francis

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a)whether Basmati Rice is being sold as "Made in Italy" in certain parts of the world;

(b)if so, whether the Government has recently taken up the patenting of Basmati rice as a product of India;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the difficulties being faced by the Government in patenting basmati rice as an Indian produce?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR)

(a):As per Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) under Department of Commerce, a case had come to its notice whereby in Brazil a packet of Basmati rice labeled as "Manufactured and Processed in Italy" was traced. The Ministry of Commerce & Industry took up the matter through diplomatic channels of Italian Embassy in India and through the European Union (EU) office in New Delhi. As a result, the applicant has confirmed his willingness to amend the label providing disclaimer to the origin of the Basmati Rice.

(b)& (c): Basmati Rice, per se, is a not a patentable subject matter as per Section 3 (j) of the Indian Patent Act 1970. An application for protection of Basmati Rice as a geographical indication has been filed by a non profit organization, namely "HERITAGE", Haryana at the Geographical Indications Registry, Chennai.

(d):Since Basmati is a Geographical Indication of rice originating from a geographical region extending over India and Pakistan, the interests of all producers of Basmati in the designated area need to be protected.